

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- A4
1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~and system~~ for providing a ~~first end-users~~ with the ability to engage in the swap of ~~at least one~~ one or more items with a ~~at least a second end~~ one or more other users comprising the following steps:
users entering a ~~first~~ one or more items to be swapped in an inventory of ~~a the system by the first end-user;~~
~~the system determining a number of credits for each item and providing a fixed number of said credits to a user for entering said item by said system based upon the characteristics of said item which credits can then be used by said user~~ the first end user toward acquiring to purchase a one or more ~~second items placed entered by said one or more other users~~ second end user.
 2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~there~~ the system maintains a balance between the combined credit value of all items of inventory and the total number of credits of all end-users- combined.
 3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the balance is maintained such that any time an item is removed from the inventory of the system, the equivalent number of credits must also be removed from ~~the account of an end~~ one or more users.
 4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the balance ~~may be~~ is maintained ~~by~~ if a removed inventory item ~~is being~~ is replaced by one or more items of combined equivalent value in credits.
 5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the balance ~~is~~ may be maintained ~~by~~ if a removed inventory item ~~being~~ is replaced by one or more item of equivalent or greater value in credits wherein, if greater, the excess credits are provided to one or more users.

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6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ~~inventory comprises items~~ are selected from the group consisting of including books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said system further provides one or more incentives to a user who purchases an item and enters said item into said inventory ~~for the ability of end users or the system to provide cash for buying an item and placing it for swap.~~

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Claims 8-10 (Canceled)

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11. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein said item is a new or used item purchased from the system.

12. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein said purchased item must be entered into said inventory within a predetermined time after purchase.

13. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the incentive is monetary.

14. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the incentive is the reduction in the cost of an item for sale.

15. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the incentive is a gift certificate.

16. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the incentive is a number of credits.

17. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein acquiring an item will neither dilute nor enhance the value of the credits of users not involved in said acquisition.

18. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the number of credits a user must use to acquire an item is the same number of credits provided to the user who entered said item into said inventory.

19. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the number of credits provided to a user for items entered by said user are aggregated and placed into an account for said user.

20. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the number of credits used by a user to acquire an item is deducted from said user's account.

21. The method of claim 1, wherein the number of credits provided for entering an item is determined by the system depending on one or more of said item's characteristics.

22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein said characteristics are determined by reference to one or more databases.

23. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein at least one factor used to determine said number of credits is information indicative of the quality of said item.

24. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein all items must be of a predetermined minimum quality.

25. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein certain items must be of a predetermined minimum quality.

26. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein items are entered into said inventory by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

27. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein items are entered into said inventory by reference to the Universal Product Code.

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28. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to users only one available item of each particular kind.

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29. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

30. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

31. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

32. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of tangible and intangible forms of movies, music and writings.

33. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are intangible.

34. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein users enter items into said inventory by choosing from items in one or more databases.

35. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein users are not permitted to input the attributes of an item they enter into said inventory.

36. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein users are permitted to input certain attributes of an item entered into said inventory.

37. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein users choose which attributes they may input of an item they enter into said inventory.

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38. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein after a period has elapsed from when an item was entered into said inventory and said item has not been acquired by a user, said item is removed from said inventory.

39. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein after a period has elapsed from when an item was entered into said inventory and said item has not been acquired by a user, the number of credits provided is reduced for said item.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein said reduced number of credits is removed from one or more users.

41. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the system reduces said credits for said item..

42. (New) The method of claim 39, wherein the system requires the user who entered said item to reduce said credits.

43. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the system permits a user to enter an item into said inventory wherein said user may allow other users to choose whether to purchase said item or to use credits to acquire said item.

44. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the system sets the purchase price for said item as a constant determined by the system multiplied by the number of credits for said item.

45. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the user sets the purchase price for said item.

46. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein, if an item is purchased, the number of credits which was provided for said item when said item was entered is removed from one or more users.

47. (New) The method of claim 43, wherein, if an item is purchased, the number of credits which was provided for said item when said item was entered is removed from the user who entered said item into said inventory.

48. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein if the user who entered said item does not have sufficient unused credits to be removed, said user must enter one or more items into said inventory of equal or greater credit value of said item, wherein if greater, the excess credits will be provided to said user.

49. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein if said user does not have sufficient unused credits to be removed, said user forfeits the purchase price.

50. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein if said user does not have sufficient unused credits to be removed, said user forfeits a portion of the purchase price to the extent the number of credits removed is less than the number of credits provided when said item was entered.

51. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein entering an item into said inventory creates no immediate obligation on the part of the user to surrender said item.

52. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein there is more than one inventory.

53. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the system is electronic.

54. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein a user's unused credits is not required to be equal to the combined total credits of all inventory items entered by said user which have not been surrendered.

55. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the system determines when the user must surrender an item.

56. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein a user may acquire an item from another user where it is not required that said other user acquire any item from said user.

57. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein a user's unused credits are transferred to the system when said user's account is closed.

58. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the system is Internet based.

59. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the system is a user.

60. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein communication between said users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

61. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein communication between said users and said system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.

62. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein communication between said users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

63. (New) A method of operating a barter system, comprising:

one or more users listing one or more items on the system wherein listing an item obligates the listing user to surrender said item when requested by the barter system; and
awarding to each user a barter credit determined by the system for each listed item wherein barter credit may be used by users toward the acquisition of one or more items that are listed on the barter system by other users.

64. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system maintains a balance between the combined barter credit of all items of inventory and the total barter credit of all users combined.

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65. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the balance is maintained such that any time an item is removed from the inventory of the system, the equivalent amount of barter credit must also be removed from one or more users.

66. (New) The method of claim 64, wherein the balance is maintained by a removed inventory item being replaced by one or more items of combined equivalent value in barter credit.

67. (New) The method of claim 64, wherein the balance is maintained by a removed inventory item being replaced by one or more items of equivalent or greater value in barter credit wherein, if greater, the excess barter credit is provided to one or more users.

68. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

69. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein said system further provides one or more incentives to a user who purchases an item and lists said item.

70. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein said item is a new or used item purchased from the system.

71. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein said purchased item must be listed within a predetermined time after purchase.

72. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is monetary.

73. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is the reduction in the cost of an item for sale.

74. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is a gift certificate.

75. (New) The method of claim 69, wherein the incentive is barter credit.

76. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein acquiring an item will neither dilute nor enhance the value of the barter credit of users not involved in said acquisition.

77. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the barter credit a user must use to acquire an item is the same amount of barter credit provided to the user who listed said item.

78. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the barter credit provided to a user for listing items is placed into an account for said user.

79. (New) The method of claim 78, wherein the barter credit used by a user to acquire an item is deducted from said user's account.

80. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the barter credit provided for listing an item is determined by the system depending on one or more of said item's characteristics.

81. (New) The method of claim 80, wherein said characteristics are determined by reference to one or more databases.

82. (New) The method of claim 80, wherein at least one factor used to determine said barter credit is information indicative of the quality of said item.

83. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein all items must be of a predetermined minimum quality.

84. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein certain items must be of a predetermined minimum quality.

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85. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein items are listed by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

86. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein items are listed by reference to the Universal Product Code.

87. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system groups items of a particular kind together and offers to users only one available item of each particular kind.

88. (New) The method of claim 87, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

89. (New) The method of claim 87, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

90. (New) The method of claim 87, wherein said one available item offered is the earliest one listed.

91. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of tangible and intangible forms of movies, music and writings.

92. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein said items are intangible.

93. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein users enter items into said inventory by choosing from items in one or more databases.

94. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein users are not permitted to input the attributes of an item they list.

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95. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein users are permitted to input certain attributes of an item they list.

96. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein users choose which attributes they may input of an item they list.

97. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein after a period has elapsed from when an item was listed and said item has not been acquired by a user, said item is removed from the system.

98. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein after a period has elapsed from when an item was listed and said item has not been acquired by a user, the barter credit provided is reduced for said item.

99. (New) The method of claim 98, wherein said the amount by which said barter credit is reduced is removed from one or more users.

100. (New) The method of claim 98, wherein the system reduces said barter credit for said item.

101. (New) The method of claim 98, wherein the system requires the user who entered said item to reduce said barter credit.

102. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system permits a user to list an item wherein said user may allow other users to choose whether to purchase said item or to use barter credit to acquire said item.

103. (New) The method of claim 102, wherein the system sets the purchase price for said item as a constant determined by the system multiplied by the barter credit for said item.

104. (New) The method of claim 102, wherein the user sets the purchase price for said item.

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105. (New) The method of claim 102, wherein, if an item is purchased, the barter credit which was provided for said item when said item was listed is removed from one or more users.

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106. (New) The method of claim 102, wherein, if an item is purchased, the barter credit which was provided for said item when said item was listed is removed from the user who listed said item.

107. (New) The method of claim 106, wherein if the user who listed said item does not have sufficient unused barter credit to be removed, said user must list one or more items of equal or greater barter credit value of said item, wherein if greater, the excess barter credit will be provided to said user.

108. (New) The method of claim 106, wherein if said user does not have sufficient unused barter credit to be removed, said user forfeits the purchase price.

109. (New) The method of claim 106, wherein if said user does not have sufficient unused barter credit to be removed, said user forfeits a portion of the purchase price to the extent the barter credit removed is less than the barter credit provided when said item was listed.

110. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein listing an item creates no immediate obligation on the part of the user to surrender said item.

111. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system is electronic.

112. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein a user's unused barter credit is not required to be equal to the combined barter credit of all inventory items listed by said user which have not been surrendered.

113. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system determines when the user must surrender an item.

114. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein a user may acquire an item from another user where it is not required that said other user acquire any item from said user.

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115. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein a user's unused barter credit is transferred to the system when said user's account is closed.

116. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system is Internet based.

117. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein the system is a user.

118. (New) The method of claim 63, wherein communication between said users and said system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

119 (New) The method of claim 63, wherein communication between said users and said system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.

120 (New) The method of claim 63, wherein communication between said users and said system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

121. (New) A method of operating a business, comprising:
 permitting a user to purchase an item; and
 providing one or more incentives to the user to list the purchased item as being available for barter with other users.

122. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein the incentive is monetary.

123. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein the incentive is a gift certificate.

124. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein the incentive comprises awarding the user trading credits that may be used toward the acquisition of items that are listed by other users.

125. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein the system is electronic.

126. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein said business is Internet based.

127. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

128. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.

129. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

130. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

131. (New) The method of claim 121, wherein said items are intangible.

132. (New) A method of operating a business, comprising:

one or more users entering items into an inventory where the system offers those items to other users;

the system grouping items of a particular kind together and offering to said other users only one available item of each particular kind.

131. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

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132. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

133. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein the one available item offered is the earliest one entered into said inventory.

134. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein said system is electronic.

135. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein said system is Internet based.

136. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

137. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein said items are intangible.

138. (New) The method of claim 132, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

139 (New) The method of claim 132, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.

140 (New) The method of claim 132, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

141. (New) A method of operating a business, comprising:

one or more users entering items into an inventory wherein the system offers said items for sale to buyers;

said users setting the price for each item entered into said inventory;

the system grouping items of a particular kind together and offering to buyers only the lowest priced item of each particular kind.

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142. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein if more than one item of a particular kind is set at the same said lowest price, the earliest entered one of said particular kind of item will be offered to buyers.

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143. (New) The method of claim 142, wherein a user may enter a second and lower price for each item wherein the system will offer to sell said item for the same price as a later entered item of that particular kind where said price for said later entered item is equal to or greater than said second and lower price.

144. (New) The method of claim 143, wherein said second and lower price for each item is set as a percentage of the price set by a user for said item.

145. (New) The method of claim 142, wherein a user is required to enter a second and lower price for each item wherein the system will offer to sell said item for the same price as a later entered item of that particular kind where said price for said later entered item is equal to or greater than said second and lower price.

146. (New) The method of claim 145, wherein said second and lower price for each item is set as a percentage of the price set by a user for said item.

147. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

148. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to the Universal Product Code.

149. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein said system is electronic.

150. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein said system is Internet based.

151. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

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152. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein said items are intangible.

153. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.

154. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.

155. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.

156. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein an item is determined to be of a particular kind by reference to one or more databases.

157. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein there is more than one inventory.

158. (New) The method of claim 141, wherein the system is a user.

159. (New) A method wherein each of two or more users enters one or more items into an inventory of a system wherein the system provides for the acquisition by a user of a an item from another user at one rate and offers to provide for the acquisition at one or more lower rates additional items entered in said inventory by said other user.

160. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein said rates are shipping costs.

161. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein said rates are handling costs.

162. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein said system is electronic.
163. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein said system is Internet based.
164. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.
165. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein said items are intangible.
166. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a telephone.
167. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a wireless telephone.
168. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein communication between users and the system is at least partially conducted using a portable communications device.
169. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein the rates and lower rates are set by particular groupings of items.
170. (New) The method of claim 169, wherein said groupings are determined by reference to one or more databases.
171. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein the rates and lower rates are determined by the characteristics of said items in one or more databases.
172. (New) The method of claim 159 wherein the rates and lower rates are determined by reference to the International Standard Book Number.

173. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein the rates and lower rates are determined by reference to the Universal Product Code.

174. (New) The method of claim 159, wherein there is more than one inventory.

175. (New) A method of operating a business wherein each of two or more users enters one or more items into an inventory of a system where said items will be offered to be acquired wherein said users communicate with said system, at least in part, via depressing keys on a telephone.

176. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said system is electronic.

177. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said system is Internet based.

178. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are selected from the group consisting of books, audiobooks, compact disks, DVDs, consumer software and videos.

179. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are intangible.

180. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein the telephone is land based.

181. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein the telephone is wireless.

182. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are offered for sale.

183. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are offered for barter.

184. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are identified to the system by the International Standard Book Number.

185. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are identified to the system by the Universal Product Code.

186. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein said items are identified to the system by allowing the user to have access to one or more databases.

187. (New) The method of claim 175, wherein there is more than one inventory.
